

Museum Procedure Checklist for Natural History Collections

- **Research and collecting permit application received. (Typically Park Research Administrator)**
 - Curator contacted for effect on collection (storage and preservation requirements).
 - If no storage provision made by collector and none available in park, returns to PRA with request for funding to provide storage facility.
 - If it is outside Scope of Collection Statement (SOCS), notifies PRA that no collection of specimens is possible.
 - If it is within SOCS and provision for long-term storage has been made, assigns accession number when permit is issued and the collection is accessioned at that time as a field collection. Include the accession number on all reports, specimens, field records and correspondence. Even if no specimens are collected the field records are the collection. (Museum Handbook, Part II, Chapter 2) and NPS Management Policies (2001) 4.2.1 and 4.2.3;
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHII/mh2ch2firstfile.pdf> and <http://www.nps.gov/refdesk/mp/chapter4.pdf>
 - Collecting permit specifies:
 - whether or not specimens will be collected
 - Whether they will be consumptively used or saved; (consumed specimens not cataloged;
 - If they are saved, why they were saved and where they will be stored.
 - Collecting permit or contract identifies records to be created and specifies the disposition of the field records. If original records are not available, high quality "archival" quality copies should be obtained.
 - **If the researcher is:**
 - Federal government employee, specify that field notes, specimens and publications are the property of NPS and are deposited in the museum collection at the end of the project.
 - **A federal government contracted researcher, be sure to include not only that the specimens remain the property of the U.S. National Park Service, but also that these are "works for hire" so that the information gained, publications and associated records remain federal property.**
 - An independent researcher, then specimens and copies of field notes are NPS property; publication is the researcher's but we need copies for the collection.
- **Prior to going to the field (Principal Investigator and Research Administrator)**
 - Review required data for entry into the ANCS+ database. (will go into NPSpecies first so if it goes into NPSpecies it should go into ANCS+)
 - The preservation of natural resource specimens begins with field collecting techniques. Collecting biological specimens include techniques for killing, fixing, mounting and preserving. The methods for preserving specimens depend on the intended use and should be spelled out in the contract or cooperative agreement. For the long-term preservation of the specimens it is essential for the collector to provide park curatorial staff with documentation on the techniques and materials used in the field.

- **Return from the field**

- Curator prepares an outgoing loan for the collection records and specimens during the processing by the collector. Include full address of collector's institution, telephone number, and email in case there are questions at a later date.
- Leave a copy of field records
- Park assigns catalog numbers for current year's specimens.
- Park supplies NPS labels or they may be generated from ANCS+ once data has been entered [36 CFR 2.5(g)1]. For guidance on specific NPS labeling procedures for NH specimens see MH, Part II, Appendix J, Section K
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHII/mh2appj.pdf> Instructions for printing labels using ANCS+ are Chapter 5 of the ANCS+ User Manual or
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/ancs.html>
- Park provides collector with a copy of ANCS+ (software, instructions and contract agreement for use of that software) and phone number for technical support. (Additional funding from project may be necessary.)
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/ancs.html> , See chapter 2 for Biology
- Collector catalogs the specimens and enters data into NPSpecies or ANCS+ making the information available for future accountability, inventory and research. Museum Handbook, Part II, Chapter 3, Cataloging, Section F, Natural History Catalog Data Fields (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHII/mh2ch3.pdf>) and, Appendix H, Natural History, (not available on line as of September 26, 2001)
- Collector provides completed ANCS+ records to the park and the specimens if they are to be deposited in the park.
- Collector provides field records and other project files to park in archival quality housing at completion of project. See Archives handout. Park catalogs with funding from that project.

- **Final checklist for researcher and NH park contact before payment authorized**

- ☐ Complete contact information of your institution is available
- ☐ Complete copy of field notes with dates of collection, investigator's name and affiliation attached
- ☐ All specimens to be retained are identified
- ☐ Each specimen, lot of specimens, or jar carries an NPS label
- ☐ Arrangements made for investigator to provide for the collection a copy of research reports based on the specimens
- ☐ Follow up mechanism for contact established
- ☐ Curator notified by the investigator of special status of any of the specimens (type specimen, rare or endangered species, etc.)
- ☐ Records of the NPS research and collecting permit or other Federal and State (if applicable) permits relating to the field project must be provided.
- ☐ All specimens requiring special care must have specific directions attached (the formula for the preserving solution, or fixative, and/or its name and the concentration.)
- ☐ All data entry products have been turned over and accepted by curator and loan work completed.

- **Curator responsibilities**

- Append ANCS+ data to their existing database.

- If collections are returned to park following initial cataloging and preservation, the outgoing loan to collector is canceled.
- If collections are stored off-site, park determines that the specimens are stored according to museum standards to ensure their preservation and protection. A new outgoing loan may be necessary.
- May check on specimens at any time but will likely check on them during the annual random sample inventory.
- Complete cataloging of all data and archival products.

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